

THE UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE



est. 1861

*This is a printing office
Crossroads of civilization
Refuge of all the arts against
the ravages of time
Armory of fearless truth against
whispering rumor
Incessant trumpet of trade
From this place words may fly abroad
Not to perish on waves of sound
Not to vary with the writer's hand
But fixed in time
Having been verified by proof
Friend, you stand on sacred ground
This is a printing office*

This verse, written in 1932 by Beatrice Warde, an American typographer, writer and scholar, greets those who enter the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) on a bronze plaque in the main lobby. The GPO was at the time and still is today a crossroads of the Federal Government - the junction where official information from all branches of the Government is collected, preserved, and then disseminated to the American people. Since the GPO's existence, the mission of the agency has created a new relationship between the Nation's people and their government, involving citizens to a far greater extent than ever before.



For more than 140 years, the GPO has kept Americans informed by producing and distributing Federal Government information products. The GPO was born through the printing reform bill of 1860, sponsored by Ohio Congressman John A. Gurley, a former newspaperman. The printing reform bill of 1860 led to the establishment of the U.S. Government Printing Office in 1861, on the eve of the Civil War. President James Buchanan signed the Congressional legislation and “The GPO” of today was born. On the day that Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President, March 4, 1861, the GPO opened its doors on H Street at North Capitol.

Since the beginning, the GPO has carried out its mission in a service-oriented environment that emphasizes the public’s need for timeliness, quality, security, and economy. Today, GPO combines conventional technology with state-of-the-art methods whether providing public access to Government information online, or producing or procuring printed publications that serve the information needs of the U.S. Congress, Federal agencies and the American public.

ROLE IN GOVERNMENT

Created initially to satisfy the printing needs of Congress, the GPO today is the focal point for printing and information dissemination for the entire Federal community. In addition to Congress and the White House, approximately 130 Federal departments and agencies rely on the GPO’s services. Congressional publications, Federal regulations and reports, census and tax forms, and U.S. passports are among the documents produced by or through the GPO. At one time, the GPO’s mission was accomplished through the production and procurement of conventional ink-on-paper printing. Today, after more than a generation’s experience with electronic printing systems, the GPO is providing Government information in a wide range of formats, including print, microfiche, CD-ROM, and online through GPO Access.

The Public Printer, who serves as the GPO’s chief executive officer, is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The GPO operates under the authority of the public printing and documents chapters of Title 44 of the U.S. Code and overseen by the congressional Joint Committee on Printing.

FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

Carrying out the GPO’s mission today is a skilled and dedicated workforce of about 2,700 employees nationwide. Most are based at the GPO’s central office facility in the Nation’s Capital making the GPO the largest industrial employer in the District of Columbia. The GPO bookstore and publications warehouse is also located in the Washington D.C. area. GPO operates a printing plant in Denver, a technical documentation facility in Atlantic City, NJ, a publication distribution facility in Pueblo, CO, as well as regional and satellite procurement offices throughout the country.

FUNDING

Unlike most Federal agencies, the GPO operates much like a business—it is reimbursed by its customers for the cost of work performed. The GPO also receives two appropriations, one to pay for the cost of congressional printing, and the other to fund the cataloging, indexing, distribution, and online access to Government documents, through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) and as required by law. These funds are provided through the annual legislative branch appropriations bill, and together they comprise about 4 percent of total legislative branch appropriations.



PROCUREMENT SERVICES

Nearly 75 percent of GPO's printing revenue is from agencies for work procured by the GPO to the private sector printing industry. The GPO has a long-standing partnership with America's printing industry to provide for the Government's printing needs. It competitively buys products and services from nearly 2,300 private sector firms in all 50 States. It is one of the Government's most successful procurement programs, assuring the most cost-effective use of the taxpayers' printing dollar.

PLANT

The GPO's plant facility provides state-of-the-art electronic information systems and production technologies to support the information product needs of Congress and Federal agencies. GPO produces the *Congressional Record* overnight when Congress is in session, and bills, hearings, documents, reports, and committee prints in time to support Congress' legislative needs. Also produced in the plant are the *Federal Register*, the *Code of Federal Regulations*, passports, postal cards, and other key Government documents, such as the annual *U.S. Budget*. Paper used by GPO and its contractors meet Federal recycled paper requirements and all GPO printing inks utilize vegetable oil.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Beginning in the 1960's, the GPO was one of the first printing organizations nationwide to pioneer the use of electronic typesetting systems in place of traditional practices. Since then, successive generations of technology have been deployed by the GPO to develop electronic databases of Government information products from which publications in both print and electronic formats are produced. Computer-to-plate technology has further updated the GPO's capabilities. The GPO has also been a leading producer of CD-ROMs of Government information for more than a decade. The GPO uses electronic information technology to increase efficiency in its printing processes, facilitate e-commerce in its printing procurement and documents sales programs, and expand public access to Government information via the Internet.

SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS

Through its Superintendent of Documents' programs, the GPO disseminates the largest volume of U.S. Government publications and information in the world. More than 30 million printed publications are usually distributed annually and nearly 394 million Government documents, or about 33 million per month, are downloaded from GPO Access at a cost of less than a penny per retrieval.

To keep America informed, the GPO offers Government publications for sale to the public. Approximately 9,000 titles are available for sale at any given time, including books, CD-ROMs, and other electronic formats. This provides the public with a wide variety of low cost consumer-oriented publications as well as Congressional documents, and executive and judicial publications. Documents can also be ordered through GPO's secure Online Bookstore site at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov>. Free and low-cost publications are distributed through the Federal Citizen Information Center in Pueblo, CO.

The Federal Depository Library Program is the public's primary source of free access to the published information of the Federal Government. In operation since 1813, this program has been called "America's first freedom of information act." More than 1,200 Federal depository libraries nationwide provide free public access to Government information in both print and electronic formats. Federal depository libraries are designated by Members of Congress or by law. Many are college, university, and academic law libraries, making the FDLP a key component of the Nation's education system. GPO distributes approximately 5 million copies of over 14,000 tangible products in print, microform, and CD-ROM formats to depository libraries annually. Every depository library also has access to the vast range of information made available online via GPO Access.

Superintendent of Documents' programs also catalog and index Government information, distribute publications as required by law, and provide reimbursable distribution services for other Federal agencies. Under the International Exchange Program, which is administered by the Library of Congress, the GPO distributes U.S. Government publications to nearly 70 nations around the world.



GPO ACCESS

In this age of electronic information technology, the public requires immediate access to official Federal information. To meet this need, GPO Access makes online Government information products available to the public in the home, the office, the school, or through the depository libraries with the goal of broad, equitable information dissemination.

GPO Access is a leading online source of free, official Government information. Its publicly available resources, covering all three branches of the Federal Government, include the *Congressional Record*, the *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations*, GAO Reports, congressional bills and reports, public laws, the *Federal Register*, and many more. A combined total of 255,000 titles are available on both GPO and other agency servers. Since 1994, GPO Access retrievals have exceeded 1.6 billion, and it is currently averaging 31 million retrievals each month. GPO Access also hosts 20 Federal web sites including the web site for Supreme Court. Most electronic documents appear on the day of publication, exactly as they appear in print, and are the official published version. GPO maintains permanent public access to Government information products residing on GPO Access.

For more information about the GPO and its products and services, exit this Annual Report to www.gpoaccess.gov.

